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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in how to complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name GRETNA SCHOOL

other names/site number GRETNA COMMON SCHOOL, FMSF#GD852

2. Location

street & number 722 Church Street N/A not for publication

city or town Gretna N/A vicinity

state Florida code FL county Gadsden code 039 zip code 32332

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
 - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) _____

Elson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action
6-10-08

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

"N/A"

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

SOCIAL: community center

HEALTH: clinic

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Frame Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1908 - 1958

Significant Dates

1908

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

inknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

**GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SUMMARY

The Gretna School House is located 722 Church Street in Gretna, Gadsden County, Florida. The school is a two-story rectangular frame vernacular building constructed in 1908 on a brick pier foundation. The building has a front gabled roof with a tin surface. The windows are filled with single 6/6 double-hung wooden sashes. There is a porch on both stories of the north facade. There are two sets of stairs leading up to the second floor porch where wooden doors on each side provide access to the second floor room. There is one-story porch on the west side that provides entrance by a wooden door to the first floor. The first floor is also accessed by two wooden doors at either end of the front porch.

SETTING

The school is located on lot 4 of block 36 in the Gretna survey. The lot is 0.5 acres. It is surrounded by towering pine trees with a few oak trees. Across Church Street is the Gretna Baptist Church. To the east is a residence and the town water tower is located to the south behind the school. The east side of the lot consists of a wooded area with mixed trees and vegetation.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Exterior

The school sits on brick piers about two feet above the ground. Exterior walls are wood horizontal siding. Windows are single, double-hung 6/6 wooden sashes.

The main (north) façade faces onto Church Street (Photo #1). It is dominated by the two incised porches, double staircases, and the large front gable (Photo #2). The staircases flank two windows in the center of the first story porch and are parallel to the front elevation. A storage closet is under each staircase. At the top of each staircase in the two corners are doors giving access to the second floor. There is ornamental trim across the porch on both floors. Three round metal posts support the second story porch, and another three support the main roof. Scroll-sawn brackets are on the posts. The staircases have turned newels, spindle balusters, and scroll-sawn balusters support the second story porch handrail. Two windows are in the second story wall, and two windows are centered where the stairways meet. Five concrete steps at each end access the first story porch and five-panel wooden doors in each corner.

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**GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

The east and west elevations both have five windows on each story (Photos #3&4).

The west elevation has a porch at the south corner with a metal hip roof supported with three large turned wooden posts with scroll sawn brackets (Photo #5). This porch shelters a wooden door giving entry to the first floor.

The south elevation (Photo #6) has a gable end and eight windows evenly spaced across the walls; four on each story.

Interior

The floors and walls are three-inch tongue-and-groove pine boards (see Figure 1). The ceilings are almost twelve feet high on the first floor, and eleven feet high on the second floor. The first floor consists of three rooms with one room occupying the south half of the floor and two rooms across the north half. The west front room includes bathrooms and kitchen facilities (Photo #7). The east room is open. The room to the south is open with one square wooden post in the middle of the room supporting the second floor (Photo #8). The second floor is one great room with a stage on the south wall (Photos #9&10). There is a two step elevation to the stage (Photo #11). An abandoned, centrally placed chimney penetrates the building from the ground up where there once were wood burning stoves on each floor.

ALTERATIONS

The school had a belfry with a bell when built in 1908 (see Figure 1). This was removed sometime in the early years of the school because the roof leaked around this structure and repairs failed. Steps spanning the façade once lead up to the main porch. In 1969 donations were accepted to provide repairs to the building. It was during this renovation that the steps were removed and replaced with concrete steps on each side leading directly up to the doors. One of the classrooms was converted into a kitchen and a bath room was added on the north side between the original classrooms. There is a hall connecting the classrooms on the north wall just inside the exterior wall. Carpet was added to the first floor at an unknown date. Despite the alterations the school maintains its historic integrity and character to a high degree.

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Section number 8 Page 1 **GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA,
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SUMMARY

The Gretna School is nominated to the National Register for local significance under the Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture and Social History. The building played a large role in rural education for Gretna and the surrounding area from 1908-1935. After 1935, it was used for city commission meetings and as a fully equipped clinic for the Gadsden County Health Department during the 1940s. It has also been used as a community center for parties, dances, church activities, and the Red Cross. It served the educational and social needs of the Gretna area from the earliest years of the community until 1995.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Shortly after Spain turned Florida over to the United States in 1821, settlers moved into North Florida looking for good farm land. The area around Gretna consisted of small farms, some of which exist today. As the railroad pushed further west in the late 1800's, more settlements began which became the rudiments of the community that became Gretna. W.P. Humphrey, his son Duncan, and son-in-law J.W. Mahaffey began a turpentine still. The business grew and attracted more settlement. Several grocery stores, a drug store, three churches, a hotel and other businesses were established. The Humphreys also operated a blacksmith shop, cotton gin, and sawmill. In 1905, one square mile of land was surveyed into lots, and Gretna was incorporated in 1909.

Education in the Gretna area was begun in the Sunny Dell Baptist Church which sat just east of the town limits. As the town grew, the sentiment grew to have a school in town itself. For the cost of one hundred dollars, lots 3 and 4 of block 36 were sold to the Board of Public Instruction by W.P. Humphrey, Sarah M. Humphrey, J.W. Mahaffey and Addie Mahaffey on June 22, 1908. Only lot four on which the school sits is considered for the designation. The school fit the description as a "common" school." Many rural communities initiated their own schools, paid for by local taxes, and were intended to serve "common" white people from all social classes and religious backgrounds.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The school cost \$2000 to construct, with \$600 contributed by the Board of Public Instruction, and the rest contributed by the patrons. Classes through the eighth grade were begun in the not quite

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finished building in August of 1908. The first teachers were Mr. Ira L. Gunson, principal; Miss Eva Haire; and Miss Eva Hammett, later Mrs. J.F. Bennett. The next year in 1909, Miss Ellie

Hentz and Miss Gertrude Hinson were teachers. Most teachers stayed a year or two, but consistently had dedicated replacements. A staff including a principal and one or two teachers was the norm. (A teacher list attached to section #8). After the first year of classes, most school years were for 8 months provided a primary, intermediate, and high school departments. When the town was incorporated in 1909, C.B. Green, T.O. Garner, and W.M. McKeown were elected as trustees. There was never a graduating class from the Gretna School. Once a student completed the eleventh grade they transferred to other high schools to complete their education. The teachers and community worked diligently to maintain academic standards so transferring high school students could excel. The school was in service for 27 years and had 19 principals. Low salaries contributed to the turnover. R.A. Gray, who was the Florida Secretary of State from 1930 to 1961, served as principal from 1910-1911.

In the early years of the school a wire fence was placed around the school property to keep out livestock and domestic animals that roamed the area. Stories about goats running free through the school were commonly repeated as the years past. Goats were a particular nuisance since they chewed on books. Another repeated story is that boys would throw the bell rope up into the belfry just so one of them could climb up to retrieve it. Wasps lived in the steeple and stings were common. Roof leaks at the belfry were common and it was removed in the early years of the school (belfry illustrated in Figure #1). The large room on the second floor was where chapel services were held every morning before school started. There was enough space on the school grounds for various kinds of play, including baseball, which was the most popular, and basketball, the second favorite. The Gretna baseball and basketball teams played the school teams of surrounding communities.

Due to school consolidation plans, the school closed in 1935, and students were bused to Quincy. Very quickly the building became a facility used for various community activities. Dances were held in the large second floor. Two churches used the downstairs rooms for worship, Bible class, and fellowship suppers, and a quilting group met there. The Town of Gretna held their public commission meetings in the building. During World War II, Red Cross packages of bandages were prepared there. During the 1940s, the Gadsden County Health Department maintained a fully equipped clinic on the first floor that was open to the public one day a week. Sterling Watson remembers getting his polio immunization in the clinic. In 1948, the building was

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transferred by the Board of Public Instruction to a group of trustees for the Gretna Community Club. This group of trustees was the W.P. Humphrey Club. The building continued as a community center, was used as a voting center, and it received a general restoration about 1960.

In 1969, the school alumni held a reunion and began a drive to collect donations for needed repairs. In June of 1995, the building was deeded to the Gadsden Shriners to serve as a meeting place. In August of 2002 it was deeded back to the W.P. Humphrey Club and since then has been vacant.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Frame vernacular construction techniques and forms are used by lay or self-taught builders. The industrial revolution permitted a standardization of building materials and parts which exerted a pervasive influence over vernacular design. Popular magazines disseminated information about building trends and styles throughout the country, and railroads provided affordable distribution of manufactured building products. Locally available materials and suitability to the environment usually influenced the construction. As mass production became more common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, building materials became standardized. Builders in the early twentieth century used decorative features derived from historical architectural styles from the then popular Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Mediterranean Revival architectural styles. Vernacular building trends are significant for their ability to define unique regional and local characteristics.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Located in a lumber rich region of the state, and with a local saw mill, the Gretna School is an expression of local materials and craftsmanship. Located in a Special Tax District #2, it was the largest of four schools constructed in Gadsden County in 1908. The two-story front gable building is distinctive for its one- and two-story porches recessed within the gable, and having double-stairs rising in the center of the first story porch. The second story porch and extended gable are supported by side walls and double sets of three posts with original scroll-sawn brackets still intact. Also intact are the scroll-sawn balusters in the second-story hand railing, turned spindle balusters in the stairway railings, and the turned posts and scroll-sawn brackets on the west

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**GREटना SCHOOL, GREटना,
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

elevation porch. The large frame building is constructed on a brick pier foundation, commonly used in Florida to aid air circulation under the building. This keeps the building cooler in hot

weather, and keeps moisture from rotting the wooden material. The Gretna School retains an exceptionally high level of physical integrity on both its exterior and interior. The building in its use of local materials, form, design, and craftsmanship lends itself to the climate and local public service needs. The quality craftsmanship has withstood a century of exposure exceptionally well. The façade with its two-story recessed porches and double stairways is a distinctive arrangement, and contributes to the landmark status the school holds within the community of Gretna.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section number 9 Page 1 **GREटना SCHOOL, GREटना, GADSDAN
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abstract of Title prepared for W. P. Humphrey

Bi-Ennial Report of the Supervisor of Public Instruction, State of Florida; Two Years Ending June 30, 1908.
Tallahassee: Claude L'Engle, State Printer, 1908.

Gadsden County Property Appraiser, W.P. Humphrey Club, Inc., Tax Parcel Site.

Suber, Isabel, "The Old Gretna School" unpublished manuscript, 1969.

Womack Jr., Miles Kenan, Gadsden, A Florida County in Words and Picture, Quincy, Florida: Gadsden County
Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

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Section number 10 Page 1

**GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA, GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

VERBAL BOUNDERTY DESCRIPTION

Parcel #2-32-3N-4W-0430-00036-0030. OR 589 P 423, OR 569 P 1290, OR 568 P 559, OR 436 P 673, DB 84, P. 490, Lot 4, Blk 36 in Gretna.

BOUNDARY JUSTIRICATION

This property boundary is historically associated with the Gretna School.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section number _____ Photo _____ Page 1

**GREटना SCHOOL, GREटना,
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST

1. Greटना School, 722 Church Street, Greटना
2. Gadsden County, Florida
3. Sterling Watson
4. January 2008
5. Gadsden Historical Society, Quincy
6. North façade of Greटना School, facing southeast
7. Photo #1 of 11

Items 1 – 5 are the same for the following photographs.

6. North façade, looking south
7. Photo #2 of 11

6. East elevation, looking west
7. Photo #3 of 11

6. West elevation, looking east
7. Photo #4 of 11

6. Southwest corner and side porch, looking northeast
7. Photo #5 of 11

6. South elevation, looking north
7. Photo #6 of 11

6. First floor, large room, looking east
7. Photo #7 of 11

6. Kitchen, looking northwest
7. Photo #8 of 11

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Section number _____ Photo _____ Page 2

**GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA,
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

- 6. Second floor, looking northeast
- 7. Photo #9 of 11

- 6. Second floor, looking west
- 7. Photo #10 of 11

- 6. Second floor with stage, looking south
- 7. Photo #11 of 11

1923-1924	8 Mos		Mr. W. S. Weaver	Miss Lucile Bailey	135.00
				Mrs. Hattie Timmons	60.00
				Miss Roberta McLaughlin	75.00
1924-1925			Mr. J. M. Mears	Miss Lucile Bailey	115.00
				Mrs. Hattie Timmons	70.00
					75.00
1925-1926	8 Mos.		Miss Belle Davis	Miss Charline Parham	110.00
				Mrs. Lucile Timmons	70.00
					70.00
1926-1927	8 Mos.		Mr. Jack Davis	Mrs. Lucille Timmons	110.00
				Miss Martha Van Dolsen	85.00
					85.00
1927-1928	8 Mos.		Mrs. Jessie Methvin	Miss Naomi Stewart	90.00
					85.00
1928-1929	8 Mos.		Mrs. Harriett J. Thomey	Miss Grace Hentz	85.00
					70.00
1929-1930	8 Mos.		Mrs. Harriett J. Thomey	Miss Kathryn Humphrey	90.00
					70.00
1930-1931	8 Mos.		Mrs. Harriett J. Thomey	Miss Ruth Thompson	90.00
					70.00
1931-1932			Mrs. Harriett J. Thomey	Mrs. Ruth T. Dolan	81.00
					63.00
1932-1933	7 Mos.	51	Mrs. Harriett J. Thomey	Mrs. Ruby McDougald Sunday	72.00
					56.00
1933-1934	8 Mos.	34	Mrs. Harriett J. Thomey	Miss Sarah Margaret Watson	72.00
					52.00
1934-1935	8 Mos.	33	Mrs. Harriett J. Thomey	Miss Sallie Bassett	80.00
					63.00

1916-1917	8 Mos.	119	Mr. R. L. Lovell		80.00
				Miss Eunice Seabrooks	45.00
				Miss Bernice Shepard	50.00
				Miss Annie Darsey	40.00
1917-1918	8 Mos.		Miss Rena Story - resigned		80.00
			N. G. Stevens -		80.00
				Miss Leila Dezell	50.00
				Miss Bessie Humphrey	50.00
				Miss Annie Darsey	45.00
1918-1919	6 Mos.		Miss Irene Glenn		60.00
				Miss Lillian Glenn	50.00
				Miss Lizzie Humphrey	50.00
1919-1920	8 Mos.		Mr. R. L. Lovell		110.00
				Miss Lillian Glenn	60.00
				Mrs. Ruby Mahaffey	60.00
				Miss Lizzie Humphrey	60.00
1920-1921			Miss Mattie Gilbourne		
				Miss Susan Johnson	75.00
				Miss Lillian Glenn	75.00
				Miss Lizzie Humphrey	75.00
1921-1922	8 Mos.		Mr. H. B. Fletcher		125.00
				Miss Bess Cone (1 Mo)	60.00
				Miss Ione Hough	75.00
				Miss Susan Johnson	60.00
				Miss Eva Haire	75.00
1922-1923	8 Mos.		Miss Hazel Hough		80.00
				Mrs. Hattie Timmons	65.00
				Miss Susan Johnson	60.00

DATE	LENGTH OF SCHOOL	ENROLLMENT	PRINCIPAL	TEACHERS	MONTHLY SALARY
1908-1909		120	Mr. Ira L. Gunson	Miss Eva Haire Miss Eva Hammett	\$80.00 45.00 40.00
1909-1910	7 Mos.	112	Mr. Ira L. Gunson	Miss Ellie Hentz Miss Gertrude Hinson	80.00 50.00 30.00
1910-1911	8 Mos.	102	Mr. R. A. Gray	Miss Lallah Edwards Miss Beryl McMillan	80.00 45.00 30.00
1911-1912	8 Mos	106	Mr. W. B. Bishop	Miss Clara Thompson Miss Christian McKinnon	80.00 45.00 30.00
1912-1913		95	Mr. C. H. Gray	Miss Adelia Nicholson Miss Jane Nicholson	80.00 50.00 35.00
1913-1914	8 Mos	123	Mr. Ira L. Gunson	Miss Irene Glenn Miss Mattie Lee Parker Miss Maggie E. Smith	90.00 40.00 40.00 35.00
1914-1915	8 Mos.	110	Mr. R. T. Crawford	Miss Irene Glenn Miss Mattie Lee Parker Miss Lillian Machery	80.00 45.00 45.00 40.00
1915-1916	7 Mos.		Mr. R. C. Keith	Miss Leila Dezell Miss Irene Glenn Miss Annie Darsey	80.00 45.00 45.00 40.00

LOT 3

150'

GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA,
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

Site Plan & Photo Diagram

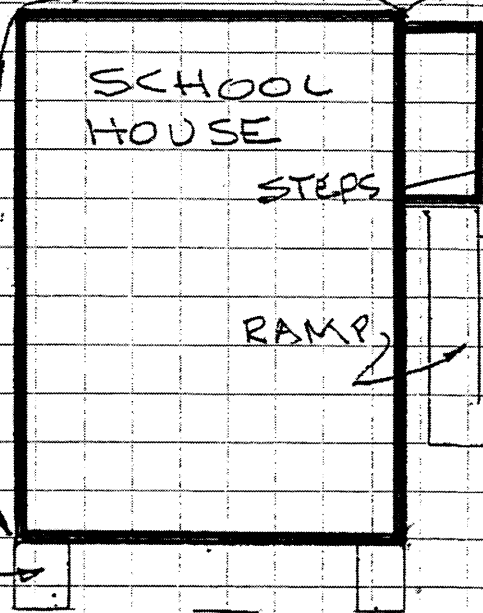


APPROX
NORTH

LOT 4 BLOCK 36
PLAT OF VILLAGE
OF GRETNA

SCALE
APPROX
1" = 20'

DISTANCES TO
LOT LINE
APPROX.

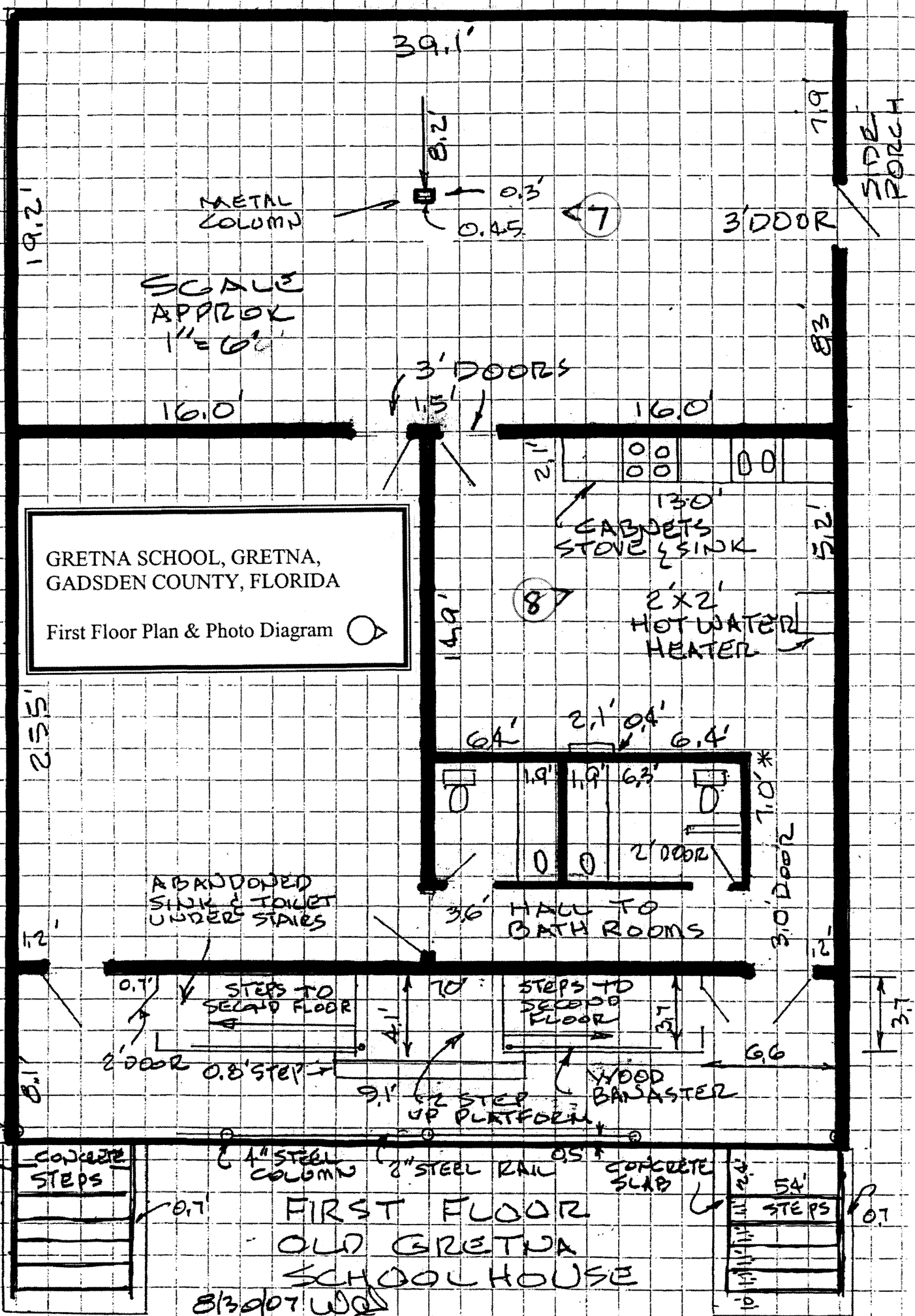


6 1/2' x 1/2' GADSDEN
SHRINE CLUB SIGN

CHURCH STREET - TO R/W

SITE PLAN
OLD GRETNA
SCHOOL HOUSE

9/21/07
WOG



GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA,
 GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

First Floor Plan & Photo Diagram

FIRST FLOOR
 OLD GRETNA
 SCHOOL HOUSE

8/30/07 WJL

19.2'

39.1'

METAL COLUMN

SCALE
 APPROX
 1" = 6"

3' DOOR

SIDE PORCH

16.0'

3' DOORS

16.0'

CABINETS
 STOVE & SINK

2'x2'
 HOT WATER
 HEATER

25.5'

14.9'

6.4'

2.1' 0.4' 6.4'

HALL TO
 BATH ROOMS

ABANDONED
 SINK & TOILET
 UNDER STAIRS

STEPS TO
 SECOND FLOOR

STEPS TO
 SECOND FLOOR

WOOD
 BANISTER

12'

0.7'

10'

6.6'

3.7'

2' DOOR

0.8' STEP

9.1' 1/2 STEP
 UP PLATFORM

2" STEEL
 POST & RAIL

CONCRETE
 STEPS

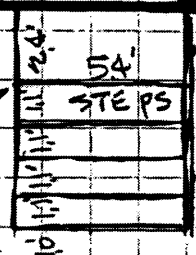
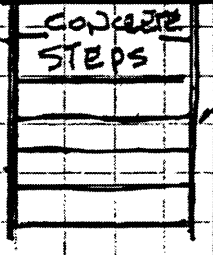
1" STEEL
 COLUMN

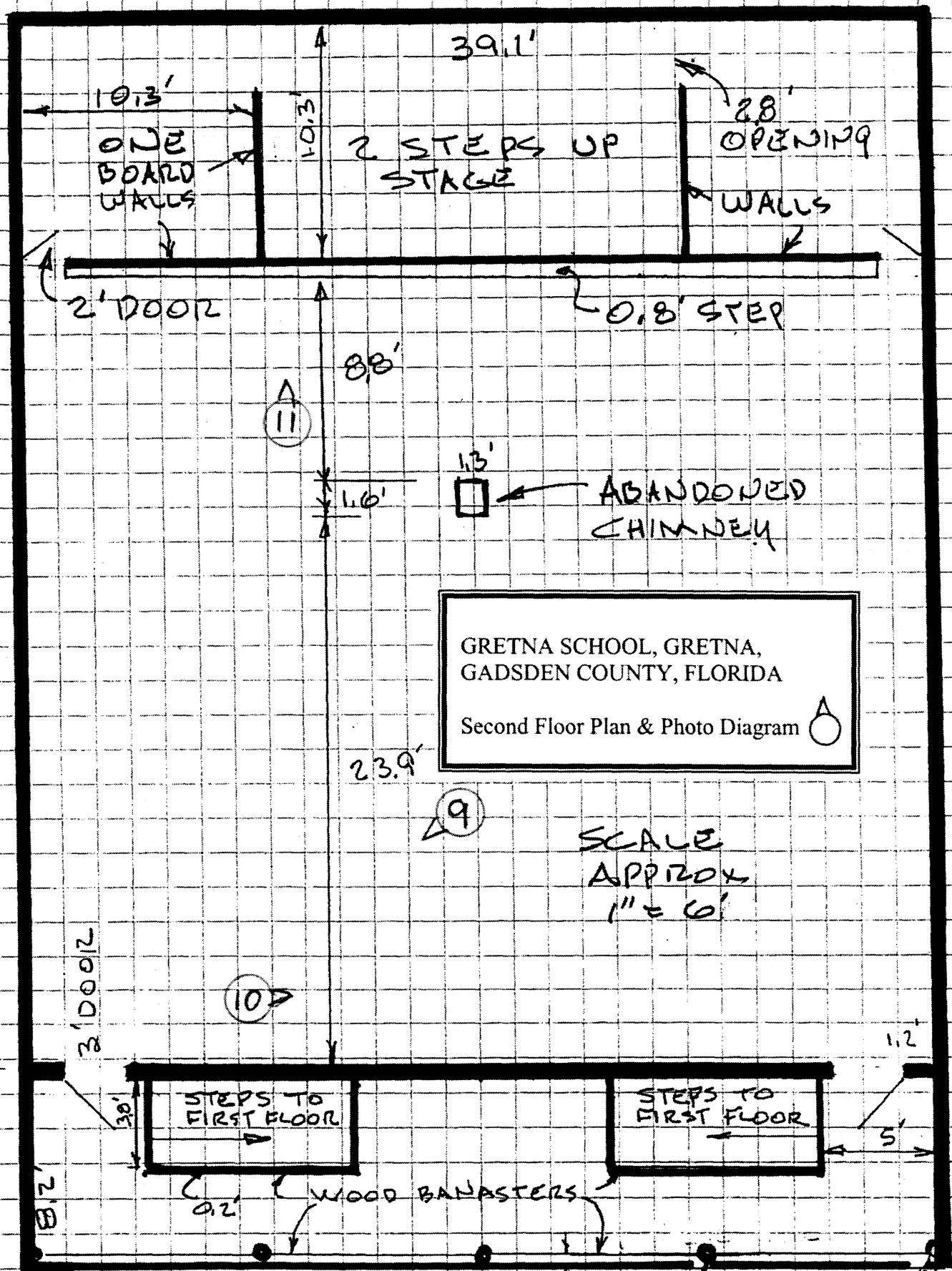
2" STEEL RAIL

CONCRETE
 SLAB

5.4'
 STEPS

0.7'





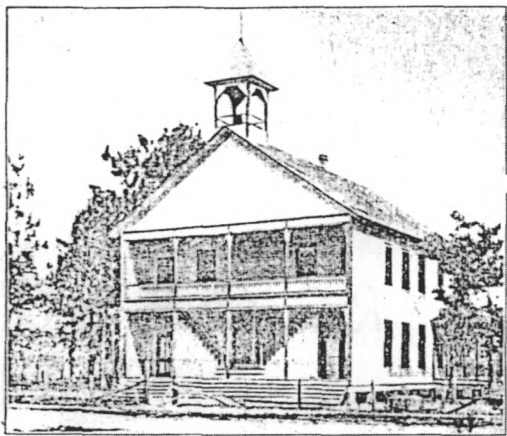
GRETNA SCHOOL, GRETNA,
 GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA
 Second Floor Plan & Photo Diagram

SCALE
 APPROX
 1" = 6'

8/30/07 WJ

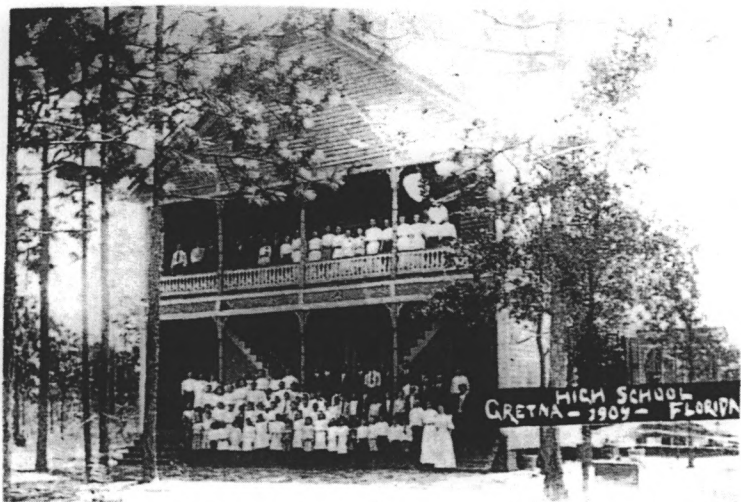
SECOND FLOOR
 OLD GRETNA
 SCHOOLHOUSE

2.05'
 WOOD COLUMN



GRETNA SCHOOL, GREтна,
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

Figure 1 Illustration of school with belfrey

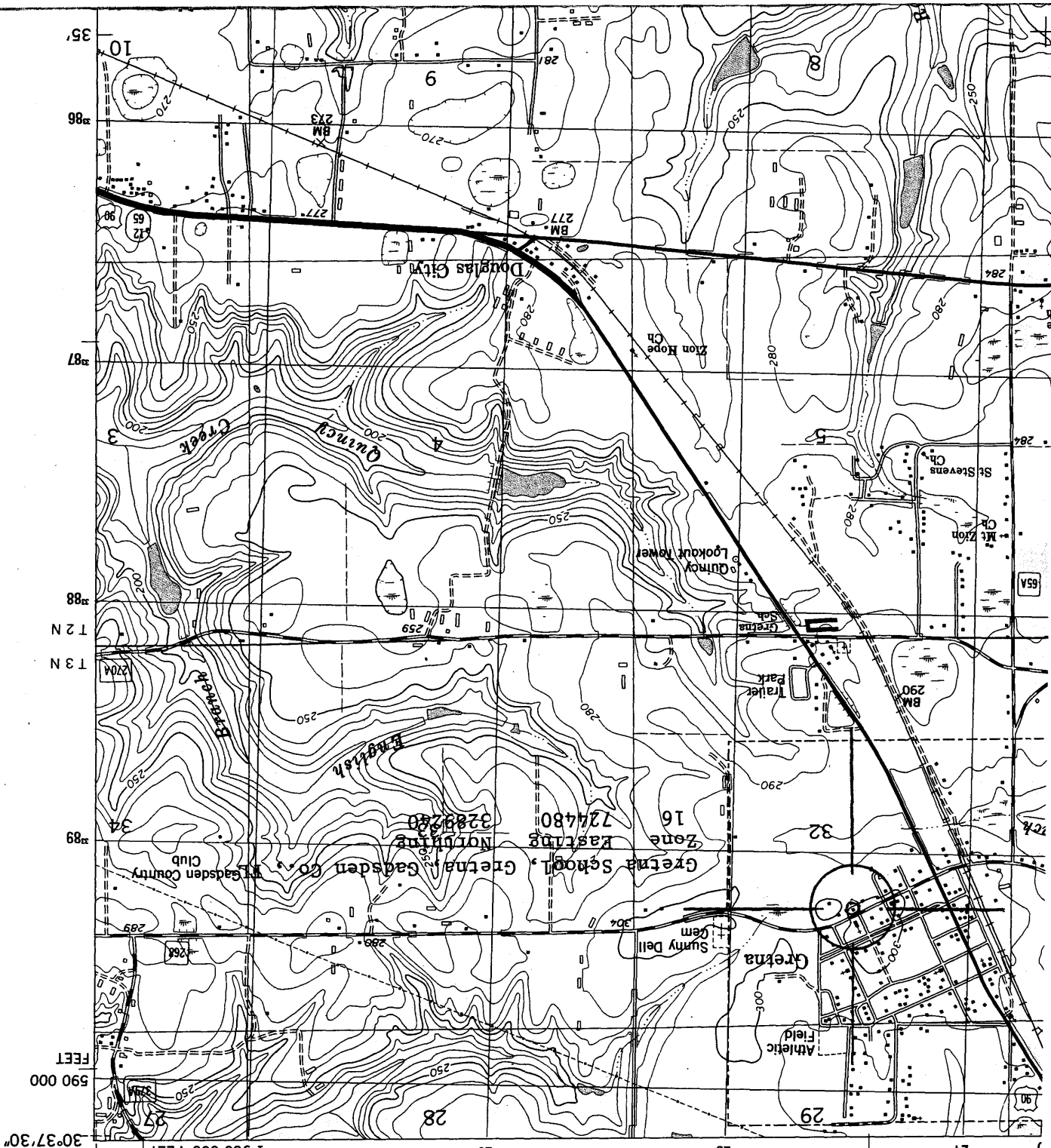


Gretna School, 1909, Mr. Ira L. Gunson, Principal, Miss Ellie Hentz and Miss Gertrude Hinson, teachers.

GRETNA QUADRANGLE
 FLORIDA-GADSDEN CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

1 960 000 FEET 84°37'30" 30°37'30"

590 000
 FEET



4045 II NE
 (DOWNTOWN)